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CNL - 115

EDITORIAL

This issue of *CNL* features a comprehensive study by Associate Editor Lou Jordan concerning the Nova Constellatio coppers. This major contribution was prompted by my question to Lou, who is a Latin scholar, "What, in your opinion, is the correct word order for the legend; should it be read Nova Constellatio or Constellatio Nova?" While my original proposition might well be judged a preoccupation with minutia, I must confess that this series is one of my favorites and therefore the root of my interest in such a detail. As you will read, Lou not only answers my simple inquiry [which could have been satisfactorily achieved with a "yes," "no," or "perhaps"] but then he continues with an exhaustive review of this Confederation period token. I hope you will enjoy his research as much as I did.

A new feature is being introduced by Editor Emeritus Jim Spilman entitled "From Beyond the Pale," or BP for short. In this inaugural contribution, Jim expands on an article first submitted by Ned Barnsley in April 1975. Jim then solicits further input from patrons on the subject of the design of Connecticut bust types. I hope this stimulates dialogue on the frequently asked question – "what varieties should be included in a Connecticut type collection?" More discussion is being presented on the Myddelton token – another classic numismatic research paper from our December 1999 issue. Lastly, a new die combination of the enigmatic 1785 counterfeit English halfpenny has surfaced and is being introduced by patron Byron Weston.

I have a pertinent news item about an event which occurred in London on September 14, 2000, when patron Charles "Skip" Smith was invited to speak at the recent symposium sponsored by the British Museum and Royal Numismatic Society on the theme, "Counterfeiting: Ancient and Modern." The paper, "Eighteenth Century Counterfeit English and Irish Halfpence," co-authored by Smith and Mossman, was among 23 presentations on the subject of counterfeit coins and paper money from the ancient through the modern world. Skip reports that it was very well received and that the audience was particularly impressed with the observation that counterfeiting of English halfpence continued in America after the War of Independence and that, in spite of the outcome of the war, such coppers circulated here without any political discrimination. The published manuscript will appear in *Metallurgy in Numismatics V*.

To date, your editor has received no report from any reader about center dots on state coppers, confirming their mysterious disappearance from all known specimens (ref. *CNL*, pp. 2066, 2076). Please confirm!

The Editor

An Examination of the "New Constellation" Coppers in Relation to the Nova Constellatio – Constellatio Nova Debate

by
Louis Jordan; South Bend, IN

During the Revolutionary War the American Congress sought images and symbols that would disassociate the newly formed nation from her former colonial status and show to the world that America was now free and independent. One popular symbol was a pattern of thirteen stars, representing the thirteen states forming "a new constellation" in the heavens. This phrase appeared in a resolution of the Continental Congress of Saturday, June 14, 1777 describing the flag of the new nation:

> *Resolved*, That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white: that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation. (*Journals, 1774-1789*, vol. 8, p. 464.)

The resolution was printed in numerous newspapers, Madeus (pp. 244-245) has listed: *The Pennsylvania Evening Packet* of August 30; *Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet, or the General Advertiser* of September 2; *The Pennsylvania Gazette* of September 3; *The Boston Gazette* of September 15; and *The Massachusetts Spy* of September 18, all in 1777. The phrase, "A New Constellation," became a familiar metaphor for the new nation. However, the representation of this new constellation was less uniform, as all that had been stated in the resolution was that it would be represented by thirteen white stars in a blue field. On early flags several different patterns were used including stars arranged in horizontal rows (from top to bottom) of 4-5-4 and 3-2-3-2-3. The now famous circular pattern of thirteen stars was used as Washington's military standard and was illustrated in paintings as early as 1779. This circle of stars was also found on the forty dollar Continental Currency note, first issued in the Yorktown emission of April 11, 1778 and in the following emissions of September 26, 1778 and January 14, 1779. A circular pattern had been well known earlier from the image of a thirteen linked chain designed by Benjamin Franklin, which was first used on the fractional Continental Currency of February 17, 1776 and the 1776 Continental Currency "dollar" coins.* The linked chain was displayed later on the June 8 and September 10, 1777, emissions of the Georgia forty dollar notes and subsequently on the reverse of the 1787 FUGIO coppers. The connotation of the new nation's unbroken unity represented as a linked chain was probably incorporated into the circular thirteen star pattern, so that the circular stars represented not only the independence of the "new constellation" but also implied its united strength.

The use of the circle of stars representing a new constellation was a uniquely American symbol, and, as such, was an element adopted on some of the coins designed for the new nation. During the Confederation era the circle of thirteen stars with a Latin translation of the legend "A New Constellation" was included on two series of coins, the first being patterns created in America by Benjamin Dudley under the direction of the Superintendent of Finance, Robert Morris, in anticipation of the production of a national coinage. About two years later, the image and legend were again used on a series of coppers, modeled on Morris patterns, that are generally considered to have been privately produced in Birmingham, England, by order of the New York merchant William Constable in partnership with Robert Morris and Gouverneur Morris.

*** See the illustrations starting on page 2149.**

Breen and the Word Order Controversy

Over the past quarter century numismatists have debated whether the Latin phrase on these coins should be read as NOVA CONSTELLATIO or CONSTELLATIO NOVA. As early as 1839 Joseph Felt used NOVA CONSTELLATIO in his study of Massachusetts currency (p. 206, footnote 2); although not universally accepted, this became the preferred word order among numismatists until the mid 1970s. Then in the *CNL* issue of September 1974, Walter Breen, limiting his comments to the series of privately produced coppers, suggested the word order NOVA CONSTELLATIO was incorrect and that the correct order should be CONSTELLATIO NOVA. By the time of the publication of his 1988 *Encyclopedia*, Breen was using the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order for both series. Breen's two basic points were: first, that the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order was better Latin and second, that when the copper was properly oriented so that the eyebrow was above the central Eye of Providence, the word CONSTELLATIO was at the top of the coin (12:00 o'clock) while NOVA was at the bottom (6:00 o'clock). The implication of his second, and more significant point, was that when looking at a properly oriented coin the more natural reading was CONSTELLATIO NOVA. Breen's position was adopted by several colonial specialists, who began using the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order when referring to either of the two series. Interestingly, several of the more general numismatic works, such as R.S. Yeoman's, *A Guide Book of United States Coins*, continued to use the traditional NOVA CONSTELLATIO order.

The Newman Hypothesis

In 1996 Eric Newman published an important article clarifying many points on the origin and later influences of the private coppers. Most significantly Newman uncovered a seven year partnership agreement dated May 10, 1784 between Robert Morris, along with his unrelated deputy at the finance office, Gouverneur Morris, and the New York merchant, William Constable; on June 10th Constable's new associate, John Rucker of London, was also added to the partnership. The business of the company was not specifically stated but most likely this partnership initiated the order for the private coppers. At the start of his study Newman took up the question of the Latin word order of the obverse legend on both the patterns and the private coppers in which he astutely pointed out that the spacing on the Morris patterns clearly showed NOVA CONSTELLATIO was the intended word order. Furthermore, Newman quoted a reference to the rare Morris patterns from the diary of Samuel Curwen, a Tory from Salem, Massachusetts, who moved to London during the Revolutionary War. This expatriate was a well know numismatist, specializing in ancient Roman coins who had been given an example of the Morris five units pattern. In his diary entry for May 15, 1784, Curwen described his new acquisition using the word order NOVA CONSTELLATIO (Oliver, vol. 2, p. 992). Newman had convincingly interpreted the evidence found on the coins to support NOVA CONSTELLATIO as the intended word order. Additionally in the Curwen diary he was able to validate his conclusions by producing contemporary usage that confirmed his intended word order. In light of the evidence Newman put forward, the numismatic community has overwhelmingly adopted NOVA CONSTELLATIO as the word order for the legend on the Morris patterns.

In his article, Newman went on to state that since the Birmingham coppers were based on the Morris patterns, the NOVA CONSTELLATIO word order must necessarily be the intended word order for the coppers. However, this word order was not as apparent as it was on the Morris patterns, because on the private coppers, CONSTELLATIO appeared centered in the 12:00 o'clock position while NOVA was below at the 6:00 o'clock (or sometimes the 5:30) position, when the central design of the Eye of Providence was properly aligned. In order to resolve this dilemma, Newman suggested the placement of ornament and punctuation in the legend must overrule the orientation of the central design in determining the word order. He further proposed that the larger design element in the legend was to be taken as the starting/ending point rather than the smaller

stop or dot. On this basis Newman inferred he had proved NOVA CONSTELLATIO was the correct word order for the private coppers. However, Newman realized his case for the private coppers was not a strong as his evidence for the Morris patterns, but he reasoned that since the coppers were based on the patterns he believed there was no other possible conclusion, stating:

> The evidence of intended word order on the private coppers happens not to be as strongly convincing as that on the 1783 U.S. patterns, but the two groups cannot be treated differently when one is copied from the other. (Newman, p. 83.)

Although Newman had interjected a cautionary note regarding his proof for the word order for the private coppers, many numismatists have now adopted the NOVA CONSTELLATIO word order for both series. I believe the word order on the private coppers needs to be studied further; it seems especially troubling to dismiss the proper orientation of the coin when suggesting an answer to the word order. Therefore, I shall take a fresh look at Breen's arguments for the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order for the private coppers.

The Problems with Breen's Latinity Argument

One point Breen put forward was that CONSTELLATIO NOVA was "better Latin." Precisely what "better Latin" meant was never discussed. As this is not a simple situation of either correct or incorrect Latin, an explanation is in order. In classical Ciceronian Latin, an adjective most often followed the noun it modified, examples abound such as: *terra nova* (new land), *terra incognita* (unknown or unexplored land), *terra sancta* (Holy Land), *ursa minor* (the constellation called the Little Bear), *pontifex maximus* (chief priest) or even *Pax Romana* (the Roman Peace). Although this "inverted" word order was more common in classical Latin, Latin grammatical rules allowed adjectives to either precede or follow the word they modified. Unlike English, Latin depended on word endings more than word order to identify which adjective modified which noun. Thus, CONSTELLATIO NOVA was the preferred classical Latin form but either word order was permissible.

However, what makes this aspect of Breen's argument less compelling is that in 18th century colonial America the Latin in general use was not classical Latin but rather Neo-Latin; this is a derivative of classical Latin modified by medieval Latin and further transformed by the dominant vernacular language of the area under consideration. In Britain many original English phrases that were translated into Latin during the 17th and 18th centuries imitated English word order. One may recall the work written in 1620 by the accomplished Latinist, Sir Francis Bacon, that was meant to replace Aristotle's treatise, *Organum*, which Bacon entitled *Novum Organum* (not the more classical form which would have been *Organum Novum*). On early colonial maps we find several instances of this Neo-Latin word order, for example: *Nova Anglia* for New England, *Nova Belgica* for New Netherland (Belgica refers to land of the ancient Belgae tribes) and *Nova Francia* for New France. Similarly, on Confederation era coins we find this word order for *Nova Eborac* (New York) and *Nova Caesarea* (New Jersey, as the Island of Jersey had been called Caesar's Island in classical times). The phrase NOVA CONSTELLATIO for the new constellation of the thirteen original states clearly fits into this Neo-Latin word order and could easily have been used by accomplished Latinists of the day. Thus, although the word order CONSTELLATIO NOVA certainly sounds better to anyone who has studied classical Latin, either word order could have been used on Confederation era coins.

In his *Encyclopedia,* Breen tried to reinforce the Latinity argument by hypothesizing if one combined the legends from both sides of the coin it would create, what Breen called, "a rude Latin hexameter." Breen then further assumed this rude hexameter had been used as a slogan in Confederation era America. This is a very weak theory. First, the hexameter Breen constructed

is very rude indeed. He tried to form a dactylic hexameter, which is the heroic verse used by Virgil and other ancient poets, consisting of lines containing six measures each, in which each measure has one long and two short syllables, which is represented as —∪∪. Typically the final measure consists of one long and one short syllable; thus a standard dactylic hexameter would scan as —∪∪/—∪∪/—∪∪/—∪∪/—∪∪/—∪. In poetics a measure can be contrasted by converting two short syllables into a single long syllable, thus creating a spondee of — — to replace a dactyl of —∪∪. Breen reversed the order of the coin legends creating the hexameter *Li-ber-/tas Jus-/ti-ti-a/Con-stel-/la-ti-o/No-va*, which scanned as — —/— —/—∪∪/— —/—∪∪/—∪. This is an incredibly forced hexameter with more converted measures than actual dactylic measures! Further, it is meaningless Latin with all the words in the nominative case. Literally translated it reads: Liberty Justice a New Constellation. Breen's rendering as, "Liberty and Justice: Newly formed in the stars" is not a translation at all, but rather a very loose paraphrase that does not reflect the Latin. If one wished to construct a meaningful Latin phrase keeping close to the words found on the coin, such as the phrase "Liberty and Justice in a new constellation" one would render the Latin as: *Justitia et Libertas* [*in*] *constellationi nova* (the preposition is optional). This, of course, is not a hexameter at all. Breen's hexameter hypothesis seriously pushes the boundary of Latin poetics and ends up with a meaningless phrase. Furthermore, it forces the evidence by suggesting the reverse legend precedes the obverse legend. But most importantly, Breen does not cite, nor has anyone else uncovered, any contemporary evidence that Breen's hypothesized hexameter was ever known during the Confederation era. Overall, the hexameter theory is the weakest part of Breen's argument for the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order (endnote 1)*.

It is not so easy to answer Breen's other point, namely that when the obverse of the copper coin was properly positioned so that the eyebrow on the central Eye of Providence was above the eye rather than below it, the word CONSTELLATIO was at the top of the coin while NOVA was at the bottom. From this perspective Breen rightly felt it was far more likely that one would read the legend as CONSTELLATIO NOVA. However, we have seen, Newman has suggested the placement of ornament and punctuation in the legend overruled the orientation of the central design. I believe this evidence needs to be reevaluated.

The Problems with Newman's Ornament Argument

Within the series of privately produced coppers most of the 1785-dated coins and the one 1786-dated variety have no punctuation in the obverse legend (1785 obverses 2-5 and 1786 obverse 1), however the 1783 obverses (1-3, in which 1783 obverse die 3 was also used as 1785 die 1) include a stop between NOVA and CONSTELLATIO and an ornament between CONSTELLATIO and NOVA. The ornament on obverse 1 is a five pointed star, while obverse 2 contains a cinquefoil (that is, a design with five rounded lobes or pedals) and obverse 3 uses a quatrefoil; obverse 3 also has the misspelling CONSTELATIO. Following Newman, one might suppose word order depended on which mark one interprets as the starting point, either the stop or the ornament. As we have seen, Newman suggested size was significant, therefore, he took the larger ornamental design as the beginning/ending point and the smaller stop as the word division, thus he suggested NOVA · CONSTELLATIO * as the better reading.

However, if one examines the reverse legend of each variety we see that the same ornament found in the obverse legend is also used in the reverse legend placed between LIBERTAS and JUSTITIA, while there are stops before LIBERTAS and after JUSTITIA so that the full reverse legend is read: LIBERTAS * JUSTITIA · 1783 ·. This reading of the word order for the reverse has not been questioned and is further confirmed by the 1785 reverses which give LIBERTAS ET JUSTITIA · 1785 ·. One might reasonably assume a similar punctuation system was used on both the obverse and reverse. When using the punctuation pattern found on the reverse as a guide for interpreting the punctuation pattern of the obverse, the stop becomes the beginning/ending

Endnotes begin on page 2142.

point while the ornament would separate the words inside the legend, so one would read the punctuation as: CONSTELLATIO * NOVA ·. Thus we see Newman's suggestion about ornament size is not consistent with the placement of the same ornament within the reverse legend. If the diemakers intended the ornament to be the central factor in the proper reading of the legend, so that it would even overrule the orientation of the central design, one might suspect they would have tried to be consistent on both sides of the coin! If one takes the placement of ornamentation to be a significant factor in interpreting the word order of the obverse legend there are two ways to read the evidence; if ornament size is considered to be the single determining factor then NOVA CONSTELLATIO is the word order, however if consistency with the reverse is considered then CONSTELLATIO NOVA becomes the word order.

Of course, neither of these suggestions will serve as proof of the intended word order if one questions Newman's basic supposition that legend ornamentation overrules the proper orientation of the central design in determining the word order of the obverse legend. A fundamental problem with Newman's theory is that, if the punctuation and ornamentation were so critical to the proper reading of the legend, why did the diemakers drop all punctuation and ornament from the obverse legend in the four 1785 obverses and in the 1786 obverse? Indeed, the absence of punctuation and ornamentation on the later varieties leads one to suspect the diemakers may not have considered these elements to be significant in interpreting the word order of the obverse legend.

Although most numismatists would agree that some ornamental designs within the legend area on 18th century coins were basically included for aesthetic reasons, there were many instances where these items, especially stops, had the fundamental purpose of dividing words or determining the end of a phrase or legend. The use of ornamentation in the obverse legend of the coppers under discussion is in some ways a special case, as the diemakers were not consciously creating a new design but rather they were attempting to closely copy a design that had been given to them, namely the design from the Morris NOVA CONSTELLATIO series of patterns created by Benjamin Dudley (endnote 2).

A critical difference between the two series that should not be overlooked is that Dudley was in constant communication with Morris and clearly understood what was to be represented on the Morris patterns, while the diemakers of the private coppers were simply imitating a design which had been provided to them. Most likely they did not have anyone at hand to help them interpret the design, rather it was left up to the Birmingham diemakers to try to understand the image that was sent to them and reproduce it in engraved dies for the production of coppers.

Newman felt the two series could not be treated differently as the coppers were copied from the patterns. This is a reasonable assumption, if the private coppers were exact copies of a Morris pattern. However, although the private coppers were closely based on the patterns they were not exact imitations; modifications were made to the designs as well as to the legends, and some of these modifications could and did affect how the obverse legend was understood.

Which Morris Pattern Served as a Model for the Coppers?

It would be helpful to know exactly which Morris pattern the Birmingham diemakers used as a model since then we could know exactly how they modified their model. The Curwen diary entry established that a five units copper was already in Britain by May 1784, which predates the production period for the private coppers (see endnote 3 for details). Furthermore, some 100 unit pieces migrated to Britain at some period, since one example with a decorated edge appeared in an 1884 Edinburgh auction while another example with a plain edge was sold by Sotheby in England in 1903. Whether these 100 units coins had been brought over in the 18th century or at

a later date is unknown. Interestingly, Richard Margolis, who first discovered the catalogue of the Edinburgh auction, has suggested the 100 units coin in that sale may have been "planted" at this obscure venue to disguise its true origin. However, Newman has suggested the presence of such items in England give credence to the possibility that Robert Morris or one of his associates could have sent them to England. From this hypothesis Newman concluded, "The period when the 100 unit pieces could have been sent to England could easily have been more or less contemporary with the sending of the 5 unit piece to Curwen in 1784." (Newman p. 95.) Although it is certainly possible that either or both of the 100 units coins produced in America in 1783 arrived in England by 1784 or 1785, it seems just as likely that they were transported to England at some later date. As no evidence on the early provenance of these two 100 units patterns has been uncovered, there is no way to prove or disprove Newman's suggestion.

Although we shall probably never be able to prove exactly what design was used as a model for the private coppers, I suspect it is more likely the diemakers had access to a Morris five units copper than a 100 units piece, since the five units Morris pattern more closely resembles the 1783 private coppers. However, before we can accurately compare the 1783 private coppers to the Morris pattern we must first examine the interrelationships among the three varieties of 1783 private coppers.

The 1783 Crosby 1-A Copper

Mike Ringo has suggested the 1783 Crosby 1-A copper was not produced by the same individuals responsible for the other 1783 and the 1785 varieties. Ringo has demonstrated the 1783 Crosby 1-A variety is punch linked to the 1783 GEORGIVS TRIUMPHO copper and is quite likely related to a series of counterfeit 1775 and 1776 British and Irish halfpence (Ringo, *CNL*, pp. 1515-20). In this regard, it must be remembered that although punch link evidence suggests the possibility of a relationship between two different items it does not prove a relationship existed. Michael Hodder has convincingly demonstrated letters from broken "A" punches, previously attributed by many numismatists to a single punch and, therefore, to a single diemaker, were in fact, slightly different when magnified, leading Hodder to suggest several almost identical punches were probably produced from a single matrix and that several different diemakers acquired and used these closely related punches. Moreover, Hodder has shown a specific punch could be sold or loaned to another diemaker so that even if one can prove a specific punch was used on different dies it does not necessarily mean the same person was using that punch on each occasion (Hodder, *CNL,* pp. 1204-35). Thus, the punch link evidence between 1-A and the TRIUMPHO copper is certainly suggestive of a possible relationship but, by itself, does not definitively prove the items were produced by the same diemaker. However, although we cannot conclusively state 1-A was produced by the diemaker of the TRIUMPHO copper, Ringo's article does convincingly detail stylistic and punch link relationships suggesting 1-A has a closer affinity to the TRIUMPHO and some counterfeit coppers than it does to the other coppers in the series. Even if one does not directly associate 1-A and the TRIUMPHO as being by a single diemaker, it does seem that the punches and style of 1-A set it apart from the remainder of the series. Further, as is explained below, variety 1-A has a different die axis alignment from the other varieties. Thus, it appears the diemaker and pressmen responsible for the 1783 variety 1-A were not the same individuals who were responsible for varieties 1783 2-B and 3-C and the various 1785 coppers.

Newman concisely described the defects in variety 1-A and characterized 2-B and 3-C as of "superior die and planchet quality" (Newman, p. 91) but then he went on to assume variety 1-A was made earlier than the other two varieties and that the improvements in 2-B and 3-C could signify a change "demanded by the purchasers or by happenstance." However, Newman gave no reason for his presupposition that 1-A was produced first. Indeed, based on details on the coins, I would suggest 2-B was produced earlier, while 1-A was an imitation of 2-B, probably subcon-

tracted to an associated group of coiners, either in the same plant or nearby. As the 1-A coppers are equal in weight to the other 1783 varieties, there is no specific evidence to consider them to be counterfeits.

The Morris Five Units Pattern as the Model for the 1783 Crosby 2-B Copper

If we examine the details of 1783 variety 2-B and the Morris copper five units pattern there are some similarities that are not found in variety 1-A, as can be seen in comparing the circle of rays in the central obverse design. The five units copper has thirteen long main rays of glory in a circular pattern with seven shorter rays between each of the longer main rays for a total of 104 rays. Specifically, the arrangement of the rays on the five units copper consists of a main ray followed by an intermediate length ray, then by five relatively equal slightly shorter rays, next by another intermediate length ray and lastly followed by another main ray. This is imitated on the 2-B variety with the same number of rays, namely 104, consisting of 13 long rays with seven shorter rays between each long variety. However, the arrangement of the rays somewhat differs from the Morris copper in that on 2-B the longer main ray is followed by three progressively shorter rays, next is one very short ray and then three progressively longer rays which are followed by the next long main ray. It seems the diecutter tried to imitate the model by using the same number of rays in each section of the glory, as found on the Morris copper, and also by using the descending length concept as found on the model but accentuating that concept by imposing a descending then ascending structure on the ray length. On variety 1-A, the rays of glory are not as accurately executed as on 2-B. Rather than a uniform circular presentation, the rays were engraved into the die in groupings using a device punch that was not carefully aligned as each grouping was added, giving the inner circle a disjointed appearance. The punch contained one long main ray and three progressively shorter rays on each side. The third, or shortest outer ray, on each side is very slight and sometimes barely visible. In terms of the two previous examples, the arrangement of the rays would be a long main ray, three progressively smaller rays followed by three progressively longer rays and then another main ray. This gives a total of 91 rays at most, although due to the very small size of the outer rays, one could easily overlook a few of these smallest rays resulting in a lesser total number of rays. From this comparison it appears 2-B is closer to the Morris pattern since both have 104 rays in a similar arrangement (although 2-B does accentuate the ascending and descending ray length), while 1-A appears to be an adaptation of 2-B. It seems rather unlikely that the diecutter of 2-B would have used the much cruder 1-A as a model and simply guessed the exact number of rays as is found on the Morris copper.

Also, the legend ornament on the Morris pattern is stylistically closer to the ornament found on variety 2-B than it is to the ornament on 1-A. On the Morris five units pattern, the obverse legend contains a trefoil design which is transformed into a cinquefoil on 2-B by adding two additional lobes to the design, while on variety 1-A, the ornament is transformed into a five pointed star. Several commentators have described the legend ornament on both the 1-A and the 2-B varieties as five pointed stars. However, when examining well struck, unworn examples of 2-B, the legend ornament (found in both the obverse and the reverse legends) clearly has five extensions, but these extensions do not end in pointed tips as is the case on the legend ornament found on the obverse and reverse of 1-A, but rather the ornament on 2-B has five rounded lobes. This minor distinction is more easily seen under magnification or in enlarged images such as the illustrations accompanying this essay. It is easily missed when examining a coin without magnification and furthermore, examples of 2-B that show wear on the ornament area do not readily display this distinction. Clearly, the distinction between a cinquefoil and a five pointed star ornament is not something that one would expect contemporary users of the coins to notice, rather it is mentioned as it demonstrates a small distinction in the design selection made by the diemakers of varieties 1-A and 2-B. As with the comparison of the rays, it seems more likely to me that the legend ornament of 2-B would be prior to the ornament of 1-A, in that one might more easily assume the

transformation from the trefoil on the Morris pattern to a cinquefoil and then to a star, rather than assume the transformation from the Morris three lobed design to a five pointed star and then to a five lobed design. This argument is less persuasive than the observation on the rays, since an ornament design is usually determined by what device tools a diemaker has at his disposal. However, it is worth recalling that it has long been noted the design on variety 3-C has been recognized as a quatrefoil design. That both 2-B and 3-C use rounded foil ornaments suggests to me an attempt to remain faithful to the foil design on the Morris model (assuming the five units copper as the model), while the use of a five pointed star seems to be more of an attempt to replicate a specific element, in this case the five lobes of the cinquefoil on 2-B, rather than an attempt to remain faithful to the Morris lobed foil design.

The 1783 Crobsy 2-B Copper as the Model for the 1783 Crosby 1-A

While the similarities of the rays and the ornament suggest 2-B is closer to the Morris pattern than 1-A, it is also necessary to demonstrate that 1-A is probably derived from 2-B rather than considering it to be an independent design derived from the same Morris model; for if the two varieties were considered to be two independent designs from the same pattern it would be difficult to determine which was produced first. The close relationship of 2-B and 1-A is evident from the numerous elements the two varieties share but which differ slightly from the Morris model. On the obverse, the accentuated gradation of the shorter rays is found on both varieties but is less evident on the Morris copper; also, the long main rays on 2-B and 1-A end with a thin needle point while the Morris rays have rounded tips. The alignment of the thirteen six pointed stars that form the circular constellation on the two private coppers differs from the alignment on the Morris pattern. By the alignment of the star, I am referring to the direction in which the tips of the stars are pointing in relation to the rays of glory. Star alignment has long been recognized as an assistance in determining die varieties of Massachusetts coppers where a star tip may be aligned with the eyes of the Indian on one variety but will be aligned with the Indian's neck on another. On the Morris copper, each star is aligned so that at the location that might be called the base of the star, there are two points at a 45° angle to the rays (the six pointed star is aligned like a X with a horizontal line through the center), while on 2-B each star is aligned so that there is a single bottom point directly over the shortest ray at the center of each grouping of smaller rays (the star is like an X at a 60° angle with a vertical line through the center). Variety 1-A tries to imitate the 2-B alignment but some stars on 1-A, notably from the end of NOVA through the N in CONSTELLATIO, are somewhat misaligned (see endnote 4 for further details). Also, as mentioned above, the private coppers differ in the same way from the Morris pattern in the placement of the words in the obverse legend. Additionally, the reverses of 1-A and 2-B make the same modifications to the Morris pattern. The two private copper varieties have somewhat fuller wreaths with 24 pairs of leaves, while the smaller five units Morris model has only twenty leaf pairs. Also, the relationship of the single stop between U . S on the Morris pattern was changed on both varieties of the coppers in that the letters were lowered so the stop was in the mid position between the letters U · S of the central design. Furthermore, in the legend the stop between LIBERTAS · JUSTITIA on the pattern was transformed into an ornament on both varieties of the private coppers. The similarity of these numerous modifications in both the 1-A and 2-B varieties are too great to be considered coincidences based on two independent interpretations of the Morris pattern. Rather, it seems to me variety 2-B was modeled on the Morris five units copper and then 1-A was closely modeled on variety 2-B.

Variety 3-C and the Relationship of the Three 1783 Coppers

Variety 3-C is a more stylized version of the Morris pattern. Both 2-B and 3-C are probably by the same coining firm as they have a very similar alignment of the obverse and reverse legends and a similar use of ornament. Indeed, the only differences are the misspelled CONSTELATIO and

the transformation of the cinquefoil into a quatrefoil on variety 3-C. However, in the central designs, variety 3-C has taken more liberty and stylized the images. On the obverse the long rays of glory are transformed into blunt, or more properly, bifurcated rays that are grouped with a single shorter obliquely tipped ray to either side. Similarly, the reverse design was revised so that the wreath has 23 pairs of tightly closed, stylized leaves while on the Morris pattern and on 2-B the leaves are spread open in full bloom. I suspect 2-B was modeled on the Morris five units copper but with several minor modifications while 3-C was created in the same workshop using similar modifications to the legend area as were found on 2-B but with a more stylized rendering of the central designs; on the other hand 1-A was made at a different workshop as a close copy of 2-B (for further thoughts on these relationships see endnote 5).

The Nature of the Modifications to the Morris Pattern Model

Although the engraver of 2-B tried to remain faithful to the Morris design he did not have the option of simply reproducing the five units coin. Indeed his task was to interpret the design on the 24 mm five units Morris copper and transfer it onto a die for the larger 26-28 mm surface of the private coppers. This required that some elements be expanded, such as the enlargement of the wreath from 20 to 24 pairs of leaves, while for other elements, it allowed the opportunity to somewhat improve on the original design, such as the groupings of rays which were more distinctly articulated in regard to height and rendered in a more ordered fashion. In regard to the obverse legend, the extra rim space on the private copper presented another opportunity to improve on the original. On the five units copper each of the two words in the obverse legend were positioned in such a way that it was not immediately evident which word came first. Further, both words were separated by marks with enough open space between the words so that the relationship of the two words was not readily apparent. On close inspection there is more open space following CONSTELLATIO signifying the engraver meant that to be the termination point. This subtlety is not readily apparent unless one is familiar with the entire series, for the word order is far less ambiguous on the smaller sized silver 500 units and 100 units coins. This ambiguity on the five units copper may have caused an interpretation problem for the Birmingham diemaker which was made even more obscure in the die he created by symmetrically aligning the legend at the top and bottom. He not only allowed even more open space between the words but he also equalized the open space between the two words. The result was a more balanced and proportional presentation of the legend than in the model but the word order became even more ambiguous. The diemaker may have not considered, or possibly may not have understood, the word order implications in repositioning the obverse legend, centering CONSTELLATIO at the top of the obverse towards 12:00 o'clock and repositioning NOVA at the bottom of the obverse towards 5:30 or 6:00 o'clock. Based on the other changes made in the design it seems he may have made these modifications simply to provide more symmetry to the overall appearance of the coin.

However, if one hypothesizes the smaller 18 mm silver 100 units pattern as the model, then one assumes the diemaker made several significant modifications, including changing the arrangement and number of the rays, as the 100 units piece is arranged with a long main ray, four smaller rays and then another long main ray, for a total of 65 rays. Substantial changes would also have been required in the obverse legend which, on the 100 units piece, contains no ornament. Additionally, the 100 units legend reads NOVA CONSTELLATIO · with the final A in NOVA and initial C in CONSTELLATIO spaced closely enough so that the word order is unambiguous.

If one assumes the meticulous and symmetrical presentation found in die 2-B was based on the Morris five units copper, then it appears the Birmingham engraver indeed tried to remain faithful to the original design, making what may have appeared to him to be only slight modifications or improvements. Some modifications, as those explained in the preceding paragraphs, may be at least partially due to transferring the design onto a larger surface area, while other changes were

solely symmetrical refinements unrelated to planchet size. For example, Phil Mossman has noticed the single stop on the reverse of the Morris patterns between U. S is actually located in the center of the wreath. This led Phil to suggest it represents an engravers mark, such as those found on some Massachusetts silver reverses (as the Noe-1, Oak Tree shilling) and on some New Jersey copper reverses (see, Spilman, "Center Dots"). This type of engraver's mark represents a small depression in the die made by the pointed, stabilizing leg of a compass as the instrument was used to circumscribe the arc for the circular wreath onto the metal die. In the final state of the die this center dot was enlarged and transformed into a stop. Based on the need to include two rows of writing within the wreath area on the Morris patterns (the U S above and the denomination below), the stop was positioned so that it gave the impression of an abbreviation mark with a similar mark missing after the S. However, on the Birmingham coppers the diemakers did not include a denomination within the wreath below the initials. This allowed the Birmingham diecutters the freedom of repositioning the initials lower and to the center of the wreath so that the mark became a middle stop U · S. Thus the diecutter of 2-B reproduced this mark from his model but made it appear as a symmetrical divider between the two letters, while the mark on the Morris pattern gave the impression of an abbreviation with a similar mark missing after the S. Similarly, the addition of the obverse legend ornament to the reverse legend could be interpreted as simply an attempt to balance the legend ornament on both sides of the coin. When transforming the dot on the reverse legend of the Morris pattern from LIBERTAS · JUSTITIA to LIBERTAS * JUSTITIA, the diemaker may not have considered the possibility that the legend ornament could have had a specific functional relationship to the word order of the legends. Indeed, he may have only interpreted the obverse legend in the Morris model as having a dot to the left and an ornament to the right, unrelated to the wording.

The Difficulty of Proving Intent

From the above we can glean a few indications of what it appears the diemaker attempted to do in the obverse legend area, based on certain presuppositions about which die was designed from which Morris pattern. However, even if we assume the engraver of variety 2-B had a Morris five units pattern as his model, we cannot be sure of his intent in making modifications to the legend area of the copper. The modification made to the ornament in the reverse legend of the three 1783 coppers indicates the engravers of those dies may not have carefully considered the possible significance of punctuation and ornament in the reading of the legends. Indeed, the lack of punctuation and ornament in the obverse legend of most 1785 varieties leads me to suspect the diemakers did not consider these elements to be significant. Unfortunately, these features only show us the results of the modifications and while the results may suggest intent, they do not prove what an individual diemaker had in mind. I suspect the diemaker of 2-B did not have any ulterior motive when he made modifications, but when it comes to intent there is no surviving document that explains what the diemaker actually thought he was doing as he made modifications that somewhat differed from the Morris pattern he was using as a model. Assuming the diemaker knew enough Latin, one may put forward the theory that he correctly read the word order on the model, disagreed with the obverse legend word order and then intentionally set out to change that order by repositioning the words in the obverse legend and modifying the design elements in the reverse legend. Although I suspect the diemaker did not set out to systematically alter the obverse legend, we simply cannot definitively prove his intent in making modifications that differed from the model.

Therefore, in the case of the private coppers we are not able to make a definitive determination of the intended word order on the obverse legend based on the rules of Latin grammar nor based on the use of punctuation and ornament in the legends on the coins. Neither can we conclusively prove the intent of the Birmingham diemaker in modifying the coppers. However, if we assume 2-B was modeled on the Morris five units copper, then a comparison of the two designs show the coins to be quite similar with only minor modifications made in 2-B to improve symmetry and

transfer the design onto a larger planchet. Based on this comparison, the evidence on the coin suggests that when the diemaker centered CONSTELLATIO at the top of the obverse and repositioned NOVA to the bottom he did not consciously intend to revise the word order of the obverse legend. I assume this and the other modifications were made to improve the design, making it more rational and symmetrical.

Although the evidence on the coin is suggestive of intent, we are not able to definitively ascertain the intentions of the diemaker in regard to the modifications to the obverse word order. Leaving aside the question of intent, there are other avenues to pursue concerning the obverse wording, namely, we need to investigate how the public interpreted the obverse legend on these coppers. As Breen had suggested, if the obverse was correctly oriented with the Eye of Providence properly aligned, then CONSTELLATIO was in the upper position. In this case one would suspect the modifications made in the spacing of the legend would result in CONSTELLATIO NOVA being the more readily apparent word order. However, to test this theory we must investigate how contemporaries understood these coppers. There are two avenues of inquiry to be addressed in this area; one focuses on how the coiners, who operated the press, interpreted the images on the dies when aligning the dies in the press, while the other line of inquiry relates to how the public interpreted and referred to the coppers in print.

The Pressmen and Die Axes Alignments

While reading a draft of this paper Phil Mossman suggested one should not only examine the obverse and reverse designs but that it would also be useful to consider the relationship of the die axes. This refers to a decision made during the minting process. When preparing the coining press for production the press operator inserted an obverse and a reverse die into the central shaft of the press. Once production was underway a pressman placed a blank planchet on a stabilized bottom die, the press was then operated so that the upper die came down with great force smashing into the planchet seated on the bottom die. The impact was so forceful that the images incised into the heavy metal dies were simultaneously impressed into the blank planchet thereby transforming the planchet into a stamped coin. By studying the relationship of the obverse and reverse axes of a specific coin one can often determine how the press operator aligned the dies in the press. In this case we are specifically interested in discovering which word of the obverse legend was considered to be in the upper position when the dies were aligned.

To determine a specific alignment one must measure the difference between the obverse and reverse axes of a coin. The generally accepted method of doing this is to determine the vertical axis of the obverse design, align the coin on that axis and then carefully make a coin turn; next, one determines the vertical axis of the reverse design and then uses a protractor to measure the difference in alignment between the top of the reverse axis and the 12:00 o'clock position of reverse (which due to the coin turn should reflect the obverse axis). In the case of the coppers under discussion we are trying to determine which part of the obverse design was considered to be in the upper position by the pressman when he aligned the dies for production. The question is - did the pressman recognize the eyebrow and align the dies accordingly so that CONSTELLATIO was at the top of the obverse, or, did the orientation of the eyebrow go unnoticed so that the pressman oriented the obverse die with NOVA in the upper position?

To properly investigate this question we cannot use the standard procedure, as the alignment of the obverse is precisely what we are trying to determine. In this case we must work in reverse. There is general agreement the date portion on the reverse of these coppers is at the bottom of the coin, thus we can determine the upper from the lower portion of the reverse and then align the reverse along its vertical axis. With the reverse axis as a reference point one can perform a standard coin turn; one then locates a specific point in the obverse legend and measures to

determine how far that point is from the 12:00 o'clock position (which reflects the vertical axis of the reverse). For this exercise I have followed Phil Mossman's suggestion and measured the location of the space between the letters O and V in NOVA.

A further word of caution is needed in employing this methodology. How one interprets the evidence is directly based on one's assumption as to whether the coppers were made with a coin turn or a medal turn alignment. In a coin turn, the obverse and reverse dies were attached to the press so that the top of the design on one side was lined up with the bottom of the design on the other side; whereas in a medal turn alignment the obverse and reverse dies were placed so that the designs were lined up top to top. In late 18th century Birmingham the majority of coppers were struck with a coin turn alignment, but it is important to realize some coppers were produced with a medal turn alignment. Naturally the coin turn was regularly used for counterfeit halfpence as that was the standard for regal issues (although Phil Mossman has acquired an example of a counterfeit having a medal turn). The coin turn alignment was also used for many of the Birmingham coppers that are now collected as part of the American colonial series, but there are some exceptions. As axis alignment information is rarely included in catalogues I have been confined to examining examples in the Notre Dame collection for exceptions. The only Birmingham related medal turn items currently associated with the American colonial series I could identify from this limited sample were: the undated BORN VIRGINIA Washington copper, Baker 60; an electrotype of the 1792 Roman Head Washington cent, Baker 19; the 1794 Talbot, Allum and Lee cent (but not the 1795 TALs), the 1794 TAL-John Howard mule (Dalton and Hamer, Hampshire, Portsmouth, no. 56), as well as the somewhat later backdated Mott Token. Also, the 1788 penny and 1792 penny and halfpenny minted in Birmingham for Barbados have a medal turn whereas the 1793 Bermuda and 1806 Bahamas coppers are coin turn. Furthermore, from a brief check limited to eighty eight examples of Conder tokens in the Notre Dame collection I noticed fourteen specimens with a medal turn alignment (that is about 19%, see endnote 6 for details). An example among these, which is especially illuminating, is a 1792 halfpenny from the Shropshire town of Coalbrook Dale, depicting an iron bridge on the obverse, and which is listed in seventeen combinations in Dalton and Hamer. Notre Dame happens to have two combinations, both of which share the same obverse die but are paired with slightly different reverse dies (one reverse has a stop after the date while the other lacks the stop). Interestingly one variety, Dalton and Hamer, Shropshire, Coalbrook Dale, no. 10, has a coin turn alignment, while the other variety, Dalton and Hamer, Shropshire, Coalbrook Dale, no. 12, has a medal turn alignment. As these two varieties share the same obverse die, we can attribute them to the same coining operation, so from this example it appears we cannot always assume one group of coiners always adhered to a single axis orientation throughout production! I have not been able to sample enough evasion tokens to determine their alignment standards, but the three I was able to examine have the coin turn alignment.

Due to the preponderance of coin turn examples and, in the absence of any compelling evidence to the contrary, I assume the coin turn to be the standard alignment regularly used by the pressmen in aligning the dies for the coppers under discussion. This indeed is an unproved assumption. Although less frequently encountered, there is no specific reason that would rule out the possibility of a medal turn alignment, or indeed that the series that was partially coin and partially medal turn.

Assuming the pressmen were consistently using a coin turn alignment, the results show that variety 1783 Crosby 1-A was oriented with CONSTELLATIO to the top and NOVA at the bottom of the design, however the two other 1783 varieties, Crosby 2-B and 3-C and well as all six 1785 varieties orient NOVA to the top and CONSTELLATIO below. In the rare 1786 variety CONSTELLATIO is to the left and top while NOVA is to the right, centered at the 3:00 o'clock position. Specific measurements of the examples sampled are given below (see endnote 7). I interpret this evidence to suggest the pressman of 1783 variety 1-A considered the obverse legend

to read CONSTELLATIO NOVA. He may simply have been aligning the eyebrow properly, but even so it would result in the same reading of the legend. The pressmen of the other 1783 and the 1785 varieties seem to have ignored the proper alignment of the eyebrow (placing it upside down) and oriented the die so the legend read NOVA CONSTELLATIO. The pressman of the 1786 variety appears to have used a different orientation that did not align the central eye, either properly or upside down, and thus may have simply used a random orientation (see endnote 8), or he may have determined the alignment based solely on the legend, which, in either event, resulted in a CONSTELLATIO NOVA reading.

As mentioned above, the 1783 Crosby 1-A variety was not produced by the same individuals responsible for the other 1783 and 1785 varieties. Also, the rare 1786-dated copper is often considered to be a contemporary counterfeit that was produced in imitation of the 1785 coppers after those coppers had been put into circulation, probably sometime in 1786. However, Newman has suggested the possibility that this item may have been a legitimate issue made by a less skilled employee in anticipation of an additional order for these coppers. Whichever interpretation of the 1786 coppers one chooses, all agree it is not by the same diemakers responsible for the 1783 and 1785 varieties. Thus we have at least three separate groups of diemakers and probably at least three separate groups of pressmen (the 1-A variety group, the other 1783 and 1785 varieties group and thirdly the 1786 group). That each of these groups of pressmen interpreted the obverse die orientation differently demonstrates the difficulty contemporaries encountered in properly interpreting the obverse design.

I suspect the NOVA CONSTELLATIO die axis orientation preponderates but if one interprets the coppers as having the rarer medal turn then the evidence shifts in the opposite direction with CONSTELLATIO NOVA predominating. Of course one could also suggest some combination with a medal turn for certain varieties and a coin turn for other varieties resulting in one or the other word order being used consistently. However, no matter which way one chooses to interpret this evidence, it only shows how the pressmen suspected the dies ought to be aligned, not how the engravers intended the dies to be aligned. As there were pressmen using diametrically opposite axis orientations one must either assume some pressmen misinterpreted the orientation of the obverse die and therefore misaligned the obverse design or one must arbitrarily assume some pressmen intended a coin turn while others intended a medal turn. As I am assuming a coin turn I believe the large majority of these coppers (1783 2-B, 3-C and all the 1785 varieties) were produced by pressmen who did not comprehend the orientation of the Eye of Providence and who considered NOVA to be in the upper position. As a medal turn gives the exact opposite result, this conclusion is clearly tentative. This line of inquiry does not give us a definitive answer to the question of the proper word order for the obverse legend but it does suggest some pressmen had difficulty in properly interpreting the orientation of the obverse of these coins. Based on axis alignment it seems not even the pressmen could agree on the orientation of the obverse!

Although this line of inquiry is useful in understanding the pressmen's interpretation of the die axis orientation, it has little impact on how the public understood the obverse orientation of these coins. The subtlety of interpreting the obverse legend based on a predetermined relationship of the obverse and reverse die axes has escaped the attention of most modern numismatists and probably also escaped the notice of Confederation era consumers who used the coppers. In order to determine how the public understood these coppers we cannot limit our inquiry to the evidence found on the coins. Rather we must examine contemporary references to the coppers and discover what terms were used to describe them.

Contemporary References to the Coppers

In a news item picked up by three different London newspapers during the week of March 11-14, 1786, these coppers were said to have been inscribed CONSTELLATIO NOVA. The article explained the coppers were produced by the American Congress; but that statement was retracted on March 16th. Apparently, the journalist was confused about the Confederation patterns produced by Morris in 1783 and the private issue coppers on which he was reporting. In addition to this London report there is an independent reference from America using the same word order for the obverse legend. The Reverend William Bently of Salem, Massachusetts, described this copper coin in his diary entry for September 26, 1787, using the word order CONSTELLATIO NOVA. Interestingly, the London March 11-14 article had been reprinted in the Boston newspaper *The Massachusetts Centinel* of May 17, 1786, but it is highly unlikely this was the source of Bentley's comments almost a year and a half later. Indeed, Bentley attributed the coppers to the Republic of Vermont and not to the American Congress as had been mentioned in the London article. His attribution was probably based on the similarity of the obverse design to the reverses of the 1785 and 1786 Vermont landscape or Green Mountain coppers. Thus, we have two different contemporary sources using the CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order.

On the other hand, Newman discovered a contemporary reference to the private coppers from a individual only identified by the initials W. B. in *The Gentleman's Magazine* of October 1786, which described a 1785 variety using the NOVA CONSTELLATIO word order. In the accompanying illustration the copper was reproduced upside down with NOVA in the 12:00 o'clock position. This is the way in which I suspect most of the pressmen had interpreted the obverse when aligning the dies. This situation clearly indicates not everyone correctly interpreted the orientation of the Eye of Providence and that some individuals viewed the obverse upside down. However, what is most significant is that all sources appear to read the legend starting at whichever word they consider to be located at the top of the obverse. There is no evidence that any contemporary read the legend starting at the bottom. The mistaken orientation of the obverse by W. B. may be due to the author's interpretation that NOVA CONSTELLATIO was the proper word order, or it may simply be an oversight in aligning the eye. Interestingly, two years later, in the December 1788 issue of the same magazine, a communication from T. W. Lee of Peckleton concerning these coppers included an illustration of a 1783 variety which was named only as "a new American coin," this time with CONSTELLATIO on top, but showing that side of the coin as the reverse!

Although the intent of the diemakers is unknown we can observe, based on the correct orientation of the central design of the Eye of Providence, that CONSTELLATIO was at the top of the coin and according to the surviving primary sources, the word at the top of the obverse was read first. Clearly the ambiguity of the design caused confusion, even to contemporary numismatists. W. B. had difficulty in determining which end of the obverse was up, assuming NOVA was in the top position, while T. W. Lee confused the obverse with the reverse! Similarly, as we have seen, several of the pressmen may have oriented the obverse dies incorrectly. No wonder some contemporary accounts of this copper sidestepped the issue of the obverse legend altogether. An article in *The New Haven Gazette* for May 4, 1786, which was also carried in *The Massachusetts Centinel* from Boston on May 10th, *The Connecticut Courant* of Hartford on May 15th and *The Newport Mercury* of May 29th, described the coin only in terms of the central images without reference to the legends as: "on one side an Eye of Providence, with thirteen stars; the reverse U.S. for United States." In the London newspaper story mentioned previously that ran the week of March 11-14, 1786, the privately produced copper series had been confused with the Morris patterns and had been reported as having been minted by the American Congress. The correction was published in *The Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* for March 16, 1786 (and later in the New York City *Daily Advertiser* of May 26, 1786), where the coin was only described by the reverse legend. The correction stated:

> A correspondent observes, that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers, respecting a copper coinage in America is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription "Libertas et Justitia, & C" was not made in America, nor by direction of Congress. It was coined in Birmingham, by the order of a Merchant in New York, many tons were struck from this dye, and many from another; they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit halfpence are in England (quoted from Newman, p. 84).

Conclusions Concerning the Word Order

In conclusion, it appears the word order on the original Morris pattern units was intended to be and was understood as NOVA CONSTELLATIO. However, on the privately produced coppers there were several modifications including a change in the spacing of the obverse legend. The intention of the diemakers in making these modifications cannot be definitively known but it appears they were attempting to improve the symmetry of the design by making minor changes rather than conceiving a conscious plan of reinterpreting and altering the word order of their model. Nevertheless, when the central design on the private coppers was properly oriented, the word CONSTELLATIO was in the upper position and based on the existing sources it appears all contemporaries read the legend starting at the top of the coin. Thus, when the central design was properly oriented the legend read CONSTELLATIO NOVA, which is the word order used in independent contemporary sources from both London and America. Therefore, I consider CONSTELLATIO NOVA to be the more correct contemporary usage for the word order of the legend on the private coppers.

However some contemporaries, probably including several of the pressmen, were not able to properly determine the orientation of the central Eye of Providence and thus mistakenly considered NOVA to be in the upper position, and so read the legend as NOVA CONSTELLATIO. This also appears to be the case for the unique 1785 counterfeit copper (see endnote 9 for details). Others apparently only referred to the coin by the reverse legend or by the central images on the coin, without making reference to the obverse legend. Although the proper orientation of the eyebrow above the Eye of Providence yields a CONSTELLATIO NOVA word order, it seems the orientation of the obverse was never clearly understood so that some misoriented the obverse. In all cases it appears whichever word was in the upper position was taken to be the starting point. Thus it seems although CONSTELLATIO NOVA was the more natural reading for properly aligned coins, contemporaries interpreted the legend in different ways depending on how they oriented the obverse. CNL

Endnotes

I would like to thank Phil Mossman for carefully reading several drafts of this paper. Phil's numerous suggestions and observations helped me gain a better understanding of these coppers and greatly improved this presentation.

1. In his 1974 *CNL* article Breen made a similar argument using the same forced hexameter scansion (replacing three dactyls with spondees) to imply IMMUNIS COLUMBIA CONSTELLATIO NOVA was a contemporary slogan. This is an even weaker argument than the one given above, as that combination of legends never even appeared on a coin! Some rare patterns have IMMUNE COLUMBIA joined with CONSTELLATIO (or CONSTELATIO) NOVA (a late Machin's Mills variety joins the IMMUNE with a George III halfpenny obverse) but the IMMUNIS COLUMBIA varieties are only joined with CONFEDERATIO or E PLURIBUS UNUM.

2. Benjamin Dudley coordinated and supervised the coin project for Morris. From Morris's papers, diary and accounts we know that Jacob Eckfelt forged the dies and David Tew and Abraham Dubois were paid for the engraving. See, *The Papers of Robert Morris,* vol. 7, p. 740, note 2, and vol. 9, p. 811 (under February 8, 1783) and p. 829 (under April 17 and May 5, 1783).

3. What follows is an explanation of the probable time frame for the minting of the coppers. This shows the presence of a Morris five units copper in Britain by May 1784 is within the projected time frame for the initiation of the private coppers series, even though some of the coppers bear the date 1783.

The partnership of Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris, and William Constable was signed on May 10, 1784, with John Rucker added on June 10th. Rucker left New York for France in September 1784 and then continued on to London where he worked for Constable's New York firm (called Constable, Rucker & Co.) until his death in 1788. Newman has suggested that Rucker was the London contact for the negotiation of the coinage contract. Under these circumstances it would appear the 1783-dated coppers must be backdated as Rucker could not have arrived in Britain before November or December of 1784 at the earliest. It should be noted that Michael Hodder has commented that Rucker certainly had a role supplying a variety of products to Constable but questioned if Rucker had any role in the production of the coppers. Hodder explained that Constable and Rucker had their business running smoothly by the latter months of 1785, when Rucker's wealthy uncle stepped in and threatened to disinherit Rucker unless he stopped accepting bills of credit sent by Morris on behalf of the firm to pay for English goods the firm was importing for sale at their New York City store. Apparently by late 1786 Rucker opposed his uncle and soon resumed his role for Constable again. Based on this chronology Rucker could indeed have played a role in the coinage contract. Hodder questioned if Rucker would have had the time to have supervised the entire coinage project within the time period suggested. Further, Hodder suggested Rucker was, "an unstable person of little business experience or acumen" (Hodder, "Rucker," p. 17) primarily based on an episode that occurred during July through September of 1787 when Rucker left London without having paid his (and presumably the firm's) debts. Rucker returned to London in September to resume his job but the episode had put the firm on shaky ground. That Rucker was able to help create a successful operation in 1785, apparently in the face of opposition from important family members, argues that Hodder's assessment of Rucker's ability may be overly harsh, at least for the period under consideration during the proposed time for the initiation of the coinage contract. Of course it is entirely possible the coinage contract was initiated by another partner of the firm at any point after the partnership contract was signed and that Rucker may have only played an ancillary role, if any, in expediting the process. Whatever Rucker's specific role may have been, it does seem probable to me that the Morris and Constable partnership was responsible for the production of the coppers. Indeed a contemporary newspaper

account (quoted in the text of this essay) stated the series, "was coined in Birmingham, by the order of a merchant in New York," which, following Newman, I take to be the Constable firm. This would mean negotiations for the production of the coppers were conducted following the formation of the partnership which would put the negotiations no earlier that the second half of 1784. Also, we know the first contemporary newspaper accounts announcing the new coppers date from March of 1786 in London and May of 1786 in America. It is thought production was nearing completion by the time of these announcements. Thus, we are able to narrow the time frame for the entire process of negotiating the coinage contract with a Birmingham manufacturer and the actual production of the coppers to between late 1784 and early 1786.

Since the misspelled CONSTELATIO obverse was joined with both the 1783 reverse C and with the 1785 reverse A, it is considered the production of the coppers was a continuous process. Based on this observation it is thought the date 1783 was simply copied into the dies from the Morris model and did not reflect the date of manufacture; in fact, it is thought the coppers with the 1783 reverses were minted during 1785, probably by the middle of the year. The midyear estimate is based on Newman's observation that the bifurcated ray design found on the obverse of the 1783 variety 3-C (and 1785 variety 1-B) private coppers was used as a model by William Coley in New York City for the reverse design of the 1785 Vermont coppers. If we assume the Vermont coppers were in production by October of 1785 (based on the fact that on October 27, 1785 the legislature granted Reuben Harmon's request to reduce the authorized weigth of the coppers from the original weight of 1/3 of a troy ounce, which equals 160 grains, down to four pennyweight and sixteen grains, which totals 111 grains), then it follows the Vermont dies had to have been completed and shipped from New York City to the mint in Rupert, Vermont by October. Thus it is assumed the 1783-dated private coppers had been produced and imported into New York sometime around midyear or early summer, allowing Coley a few months to design and produce the Vermont dies after seeing the Birmingham coppers, and calculating a few weeks for Coley's dies to be transported to Vermont and put into production by October of 1785.

When the original 1783-dated reverse dies were replaced, the diecutters made several modifications including dating the newly engraved dies to reflect the current year, which was 1785. Other modifications on the reverse included changing the block letter U · S to intertwined letters in a cursive script without a stop and increasing the number of paired leaves in the wreath from 24 pairs on 1783 reverse A and B and 23 pairs on 1783 reverse C up to 30 pairs of leaves on 1785 reverses A, B and C with 29 pairs on reverse D and 26 pairs on reverse E. Also, on all the 1785 varieties, in the reverse legend the word ET replaced the ornament between LIBERTAS and JUSTITIA. On the obverse both the ornament and the stop were removed from the legend. The 1785-dated dies were used through the remainder of 1785 and into the first months of 1786 when it appears the coinage contract was completed, based on the newspaper announcements concerning the coppers. Thus, the period of manufacture seems to date to 1785 and early 1786. The rare 1786 copper, which is often considered to be a counterfeit, probably dates to sometime in 1786. There is also a unique 1785-dated counterfeit that is quite crude and was probably produced in America at some later date while the coins were still in circulation.

4. All varieties of the 1783, 1785 and 1786 private coppers, with the exception of 1785 obverse 2, align the star as an X with a vertical line through the center. The 1785 obverse 2 copper is like the Morris patterns with a star aligned like an X with a horizontal line through the center. On the unique 1785 counterfeit the star alignment is erratic.

5. I suspect the die sets for both the pointed ray 2-B and the bifurcated ray 3-C coppers were made by the contractor. Occasionally contractors would create designs in order to win major contracts but as the engraving of a die was an expensive and time consuming operation, and this was a private order, I suspect the creation of the four different dies (two different obverse designs and

two different reverse designs) was authorized by the clients, who would have paid the costs incurred in producing them. In this regard, it is worth recalling the words of Matthew Boulton, owner of the Birmingham Soho Mint, in a letter of December 28, 1795, to Philip Price Myddelton concerning a copper token Myddelton was contracting Boulton to produce. Boulton stated, "the Engraving of the dies requires much time, perhaps ten times more than the striking of the whole quantity of Coin that may be wanted." (Margolis, "Myddelton," p. 1993). Boulton may have been somewhat overstating the case as he was trying to educate a client on the time frame needed for the creation of dies, but it is clear this was a major investment in time. Additionally, designing and engraving a die was an added financial expenditure. The charge for a hand engraved design by an expert craftsman depended on the intricacy of the design, which Boulton estimated was usually in the range of £3 to £6 per die. This was considered an additional expense not included in the contracted production costs.

I suspect the obverse and reverse dies for Crosby 2-B were the first dies produced since they closely imitate the Morris model and that the more stylized dies for Crosby 3-C were engraved subsequently. I cannot determine if 3-C was created immediately after 2-B or if it was made sometime later when a second set of dies was required. In either case, once the two varieties had been produced it is clear the clients preferred 2-B since the dies cut for variety 1-A imitated 2-B and a closely related design was used on the obverse of all subsequent varieties. Events may have proceeded as follows: typically, once a steel die was engraved, but before it was hardened by tempering, the die was used to stamp a uniface impression of the engraved surface into a soft metal such as lead. This impression could be used to detect any errors in the engraved surface allowing corrections to be made before the die was hardened for production use. Frequently these samples were sent to the client for final approval. If this was the case for the 2-B and 3-C varieties, samples may have been sent to Rucker in London or possibly to the partners in New York. The fragility of the soft metal copies was such that they were quite susceptible to damage. Indeed, in regard to the Myddelton token, when Matthew Boulton sent a unifaced lead obverse from Birmingham to Philip Myddelton in London, Boulton mentioned in the accompanying letter that he was, "apprehensive it will suffer damage, by rubbing, in the conveyance." (Margolis, "Myddelton," p. 1998). Although uniface lead copies survive for a few colonial related coins made in Birmingham, none exist for the coppers under discussion. Thus the supposition that such items were created for this series is just speculation, nevertheless, in some fashion, whether it was by lead impressions, drawings, personal examination of sample strikes or simply from a written description of the designs, it appears the partners did have an opportunity to choose their preferred design before additional dies were cut. It is apparent that although a preference was expressed for the 2-B design, both dies were put into production, probably reflecting a desire on the part of the clients to keep costs down; it may also have been an expediency allowing the contractors to more quickly produce a substantial initial run of coppers to be shipped to the clients in New York City.

At some point during this initial production run reverse die C broke. Although there are no records to substantiate the following hypothesis it is possible at this point the coiners needed to keep production going and, therefore, subcontracted another group of coiners to cut a set of obverse and reverse dies in imitation of the preferred 2-B design and assist in producing additional coppers. These additional coppers are now known as the Crosby 1-A variety. It does appear the 1-A dies were rather quickly produced. The obverse rays of glory of the 1-A die were not hand engraved but rather added to the die in a rather hasty fashion with the use of a device punch. Although this created a less refined product than hand engraving it was probably considered to be a cost saving and time saving method of die production (once the punch was created). Based on the inferior quality workmanship of the 1-A designs, one might assume the subcontractor was under pressure to quickly create a pair of dies. He may have been asked to strike coins as soon as possible to help meet a shipment deadline. Meanwhile, it seems as soon as the original contractor was able

to devote an engraver to this project, a new reverse die was produced to replace the broken reverse C. At this point 1783 obverse die 3 with the bifurcated rays was paired with the newly created reverse die (1785 reverse B) and put into production. Unfortunately Crosby renamed the bifurcated ray obverse in the new combination so that the die of 1783 obverse 3 is also know as 1785 obverse 1, thus the new combination is known as 1785 variety 1-B.

The time frame for this hypothetical series of events would be in the spring to early summer of 1785. As mentioned in endnote two above, it is generally assumed an initial shipment containing 1783 coppers entered New York City by the summer of 1785 as the New York City engraver William Coley used the 1783 obverse C bifurcated ray design as a model for the reverse of the 1785 Vermont copper dies he is considered to have engraved and shipped to Vermont by October of that year. In order for the initial shipment to arrive in New York by mid July the coins would have to have been shipped out of England by early to mid June. Thus it appears the 1783-dated varieties must have been in production during the spring; possibly the 1785 variety 1-B was not part of this initial shipment and thus the creation of the 1785 reverse B die could date to the summer of 1785.

Although this speculative chronology suggests a proposed order for the engraving and initial use of the 1783 dies it is not meant to infer a continuous emission sequence for the coppers. Phil Mossman has noted the average planchet weight for the 1783 varieties is slightly heavier but far less consistent than for the 1785 varieties (Mossman, pp. 195-96). Indeed some of the 1783 coppers are significantly lighter than the 1785 varieties, for example the 1783 Crosby 2-B example in the collection at the University of Notre Dame is only 94.4 grains. This may be due to a less uniform planchet supply or may reflect the reuse of the 1783 dies at later periods during production. In several other contemporary production runs it has been demonstrated that specific die combinations were sometimes replaced and then later put back in service. This indeed may also be the case for the series under discussion.

6. Conder tokens refers to a series of thousands of varieties of privately issued British provincial tokens produced from 1787 through the 1790s. The following are the fourteen medal turn Conder tokens I noticed in the Notre Dame collection from 88 examples examined. Numbers are from R. Dalton and S. H. Hamer, *The Provincial Token - Coinage of the 18th Century*, which categorizes items numerically by county with a new numbering sequence for each county, within each county the tokens are arranged by towns in alphabetical order . The coins are:

England: Hampshire, Portsmouth, no. 56, John Howard/TAL mule halfpenny, 1794 (also see Sussex for another Howard); Middlesex, National Series, no. 977, Prince of Wales halfpenny 1795; Middlesex, Newton, no. 1151, farthing, no date; Middlesex, Richardson, no. 469, lottery halfpenny, 1795; Northamptonshire, Northampton, no.1, Jobson halfpenny, 1794; Nottinghamshire, Nottingham, no. 8, Donald and Company halfpenny, 1792; Shropshire, Coalbrook Dale, no. 12, Iron Bridge halfpenny, 1792 (another variety using a different reverse die, Dalton and Hamer, no. 10, has a coin turn); Staffordshire, Leek, no. 10, Commercial halfpenny 1793; Sussex, Chichester, no. 19, John Howard halfpenny, 1794; Warwickshire, Birmingham, no. 156, Kempson, St. Mary Chapel halfpenny, no date; Warwickshire, Birmingham, no. 162, Kempson, Old Meeting halfpenny, 1794; Wiltshire, Holt, no. 3, Mineral Water Spa House halfpenny, no date. Scotland: Lothian, Edinburgh, no. 30, Hutchison halfpenny, 1790. Ireland: Wicklow, Cronebane, Irish Mine Co. 1789 halfpenny with many varieties listed on pp. 524-529.

I would like to thank Allan Davisson who made time just before leaving for the FUN Convention to examine several varieties of Conder tokens from his collection. He wrote that the examples he checked all had a standard coin turn.

7. Using the reverse vertical axis as the reference point, a coin turn was made and measurements were taken in a counterclockwise direction from the top point of the obverse to the space between the O and the V in NOVA as described in the text. This gives the degree of variance between the top point of the obverse (based on a coin turn) and the center of the word NOVA. It should be noted that as the position of the date and legend ornament are not precisely aligned along the reverse vertical axis; the determination of this axis is not precise and may yield readings plus or minus 10° depending on exactly where one locates the axis. Also, the information given below is first listed in degree measurement then in parenthesis is an equivalent based on the clock face method of location. Examples sampled are from the collection at the University of Notre Dame (ND), the collection of Phil Mossman (PM) and the collection of the American Numismatic Society (ANS). I would like to thank Phil Mossman and John Kleeberg for contributing measurements. The ND and PM measurements were reported as degrees while the ANS measurements were reported as clock locations, each set of measurements was converted so that both location methods are listed for every example (each 10° = 20 minutes in a clock measurement). The results are as follows:

1783 Crosby 1-A: ND two at 150° (7:00), PM 140° (7:20), ANS two at 150° (7:00)
1783 Crosby 2-B: ND 345° (12:30), PM 35° (10:50); ANS two at 345° (12:30) and two at 30° (11:00)
1783 Crosby 3-C: ND 0° (12:00), PM 10° (11:40); ANS 0° (12:00)
1785 Crosby 1-B: ND 30°(11:00), PM 355° (12:10); ANS 0° (12:00)
1785 Crosby 2-A: PM 0° (12:00); ANS 345° (12:30)
1785 Crosby 3-B: ND 50° (10:20); PM 45° (10:30); ANS three at 0° (12:00) and one at 60° (10:00)
1785 Crosby 4-C: ND 20° (11:20), PM 25° (11:10); ANS 30° (11:00)
1785 Crosby 4-D: PM 20° (11:20); ANS one at 30° (11:00) and one at 0° (12:00)
1785 Crosby 5-E: ND 350° (12:20), PM 40° (10:40); ANS two at 0° (12:00)
1786 Crosby 1-A: ANS 270° (3:00)

Perfectly aligned dies would produce items with precisely aligned obverses and reverses. However, due to a less than exact alignment of the dies in the press many coppers were produced where the two sides were not precisely aligned; sometimes one side was as much as 30° or more to the left or right of center. Yet, even with a 30° variance we still have a good indication of the intended axis of alignment (for a 12:00 alignment this would be a variance of between 11:00 and 1:00). Alignment variations within a specific die combination have been attributed to die movement. This should not be taken to signify that the dies loosened or slipped during the operation of the press, for that would cause the die to “chatter” and make a multiple impression coin. Rather, die movement should be considered to signify the dies were not left in the press for their entire working life but that they were removed from the press at some points and at later points, when production resumed, the pressmen reinstalled the dies into the press but with a slightly different alignment.

Assuming a coin turn alignment, if NOVA is found near the bottom of the coin (within about 30° of 180° which is within an hour of the 6:00 position) the pressman would have aligned the obverse die with CONSTELLATIO to the top, while if NOVA is found near the top of the coin (within about 30° of 360° or within an hour of the 12:00 position) the dies were aligned with CONSTELLATIO to the bottom. However, if one assumes the pressmen aligned the dies for a medal turn, then the interpretation of the reading would be exactly the opposite, namely a 180° measurement would be in the 12:00 position and a 360° reading would be in the 6:00 position! For Crosby 1785 variety 3-B three of the six measurements are off by more than 30° but the three examples at 0° show the positioning of these dies were intended to be 360° and not 90°. There are also a few other cases in the above data where one example is slightly more than 30° out of alignment but the other samples clearly show the intended axis alignment.

8. John Kleeberg mentioned in an e-mail that he suspected the 270° alignment (3:00) of the 1786 Crosby 1-A may indicate the use of a die with a square rather than a round shaft that had been inserted sideways. It is interesting to note in my brief survey of a few Conder tokens I noticed one example with a reverse die axis of 90° (9:00), a Dalton and Hamer, Staffordshire, Litchfield, no. 19, a Samuel Johnson/Rule Britannia halfpenny dated 1797.

9. The NOVA CONSTELLATIO word order appears on the unique 1785 counterfeit copper now owned by Eric Newman. This is a very crudely made item with so many problems that Newman says it "maximizes errors." On the obverse when the eye is properly oriented the legend reads · NOVA CONSTELLATIO · (starting at about 9:30 and moving clockwise to about 8:00), which is a different orientation and different punctuation from the Birmingham varieties. Also, there are only twelve sets in the rays of glory and twelve stars, rather than the standard thirteen. The reverse legend, based on what can be read from a photograph (Breen's *Encyclopedia*, item 1115 on p. 119 and Newman, figure 11 on p. 97) is: LIBRTAS · ET [faded] STITIA · 1785 · This not only includes the misspelling LIBRTAS but also adds an extra stop between LIBRTAS and ET and probably included a similar stop between ET and JUSTITIA, but that area of the coin is too worn to read on the photos. Also, as Newman noted, the paired leaves are joined to the wreath so that they point in a counterclockwise direction while all the other varieties point in a clockwise direction. Additionally, the central reverse design consists of a wreath of 23 pairs of leaves, which is the number of leaf pairs in the rare 1786 1-A and the stylized 1783 3-C varieties, but it does not replicate the number of leaf pairs in any known 1785 variety. The crude workmanship and the numerous significant errors show that this item was produced without a careful comparison to the legitimate coppers and probably represents the work of someone who did not pay attention to detail. However, assuming this individual paid some attention to generalities, one might suspect he attempted to properly replicate the obverse legend, at least insofar as he understood it. Based on the unique punctuation and the location of the words in the legend when the obverse is properly aligned, the coin shows the counterfeiter considered the word order to be NOVA CONSTELLATIO. Thus, based on a properly aligned obverse, it appears this counterfeiter considered NOVA CONSTELLATIO to be the correct word order for the legend.

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Illustrations

Figure 1: Continental Currency, the back of a one third of a dollar note from the emission of February 17, 1776, displaying the colonies as thirteen joined links in a circular chain. The central mottoes, WE ARE ONE and AMERICAN CONGRESS are in a circle that radiates thirteen long rays and thirteen triangular shaped groupings of smaller rays. The original design for this image is found in the notebooks of Benjamin Franklin. This example of the one third of a dollar note is from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, acquired through the Robert H. Gore, Jr. Numismatic endowment.

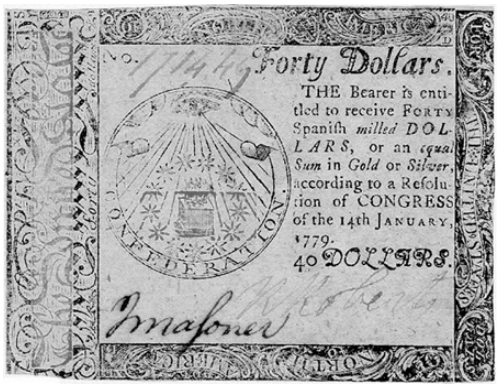

Figure 2: Continental Currency, the front of a forty dollar note from the emission of January 14, 1779, displaying a seal containing the Eye of Providence with fourteen rays shining down on an altar surrounded by a circle of thirteen stars (with each star having eight points). Below is the legend CONFEDERATION. Interestingly, an earlier version of the seal was used on both the April 11, 1778 and September 26, 1778 emissions. That earlier version contained numerous rays (at least 38) emanating from the Eye of Providence and had several other minor differences from the 1779 version, such as the lack of punctuation after the motto. In the newly cut version for the 1779 issue the individual rays were made more distinct, in doing so the number of rays was reduced. It appears the engraver did not plan for a specific number of rays but happened to end with fourteen rays. Possibly once the notes were put into circulation the revised seal led someone to consider further reducing the rays by one to arrive at the thirteen long rays used on the coins, where each long ray signified the Eye of Providence looking down on one of the states. From the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr.

Figure 3: Obverse - Morris 1783 Nova Constellatio five units copper, weight 75.15 grains, diameter 24.35 mm., unique example currently owned by John J. Ford, illustration from the *CNL* Photofiles. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 4: Reverse - Morris 1783 Nova Constellatio five units copper, weight 75.15 grains, diameter 24.35 mm., unique example currently owned by John J. Ford, illustration from the *CNL* Photofiles. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 5: Obverse - 1783 Crosby 1-A, weight 132.3 grains, diameter 28.5 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 6: Reverse - 1783 Crosby 1-A, weight 132.3 grains, diameter 28.5 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 7: Obverse - 1783 Crosby 2-B, weight 94.4 grains, diameter 26.3 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 8: Reverse - 1783 Crosby 2-B, weight 94.4 grains, diameter 26.3 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 9: Obverse - 1783 Crosby 3-C, weight 132.5 grains, diameter 27.2 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 10: Reverse - 1783 Crosby 3-C, weight 132.5 grains, diameter 27.2 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 11: Obverse - 1785 Crosby 3-B, weight 99.2 grains, diameter 26.4 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

Figure 12: Reverse - 1785 Crosby 3-B, weight 99.2 grains, diameter 26.4 mm., from the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections, donation of Robert H. Gore, Jr. *Shown 3X actual size.*

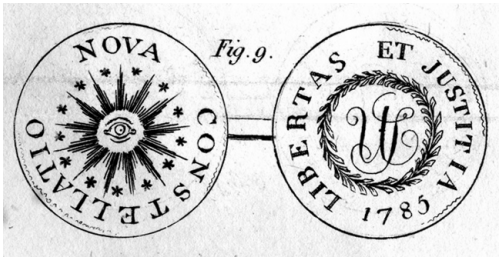

Figure 13: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 56 (October 1786) plate 2, figure 9, between pp. 824 and 825, illustrating a 1785 copper in relation to a "Letter to the Editor" by W. B. Based on the direction of the long rays at NOVA in conjunction with the problematic alignment of some leaf pairs (there appear to be 30 outer leaves and 27 or 28 inner leaves) this drawing may be based on an example of 1785 Crosby 2-A. From the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections.

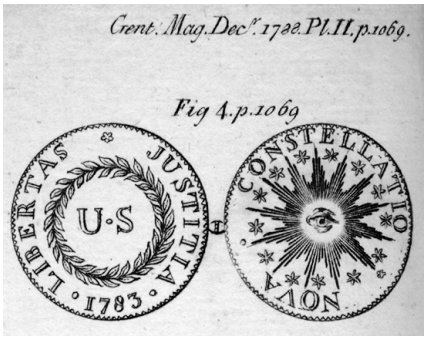

Figure 14: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 58 (December 1788) plate 2, figure 4, opposite p. 1069 illustrating a 1783 copper in reference to a "Letter to the Editor" by T. W. Lee. The specific variety cannot be confirmed due to inaccuracies in the illustration. The number of smaller rays per grouping differ from six to eight, additionally the points on the stars do not align as on either 1-A or 2-B; however the ornament in the legend appears to be a cinquefoil as in variety 2-B. From the University of Notre Dame Libraries, Department of Special Collections.

FROM BEYOND THE PALE

Edward R. Barnsley (died May 10, 1989)

IS THE DRAPED BUST MAILED?
[or What Does a Scotsman Wear Under His Kilt?]

from

James C. Spilman, Editor Emeritus

(BP-1)

Here is a new category of discussion and input for our *Colonial Newsletter* readers' consideration. After death it is difficult and usually impossible to learn the thoughts and interests of our Patrons who have gone to that land of the Great Uncirculated in the Sky and have thus become honored members of the Dead Numismatists Society. Here, though, is an article that we have "resurrected" – or perhaps we should say "dug up" – from Edward R. Barnsley. It first appeared, in part, in *CNL*-43, page 484 as TN-53.

Once upon a time, this curious question arose in my mind while reading the Pine Tree Auction Company's interesting catalogue of their February, 1975 sale of some four hundred Connecticut Coppers. Certain descriptions of Draped Bust varieties refer directly to the presence of armor in their design, an observation which has not heretofore appeared in print. Examples of such references are quoted as follows: "Peculiar round contour of armor" (Lot 264), "Die failure at armor" (Lot 368), "First fleuron touches double-cut armor" (Lot 160), "Incomplete drapery and armor, lapped dies" (Lot 224), and "Armor and parts of drapery reworked on die" (Lot 106).

It has been determined recently that Buell's Draped Bust Left effigy is derived directly from his Mailed Bust Left design. The basic physiognomy of the two heads shows them to be the same whether dressed in toga or armor. (*CNL*, Feb. 1974, p.433). It would now appear that we should, perhaps, refer to a Mailed Bust or a Draped Mailed Bust when we refer to one of the two basic obverse designs, for no one has previously identified what clothing was worn under the shoulder draped toga.

Crosby established in 1875 the names Mailed Bust and Draped Bust, designations that were continue by Hall and Miller and universally used today by all numismatists. However, Connecticut obverses were not always so characterized. In 1859, Dickeson stated that "The varieties of the types are determined by the punctuation of the legend, facing of the bust, or decking of the head". (*Numismatic Manual*, p.102). In the type tables, under the heading "Decoration", Dickeson described the busts as being "Laureated" or "Fillet-Festooned", words which he loosely attached to both Mailed and Draped busts. Only occasionally did he refer to "bust in coat of mail, head laureated", "bust in Roman toga, head laureated:", or "bust in Roman toga, looped upon the shoulder".

So therefore, it was Crosby – always first in his field – who became the first writer to set down in print the fundamental design differences of Connecticut effigies. The Crosby tables of 1786's, 1787's and 1788's list first the Mailed Busts, and then the Draped Busts. No bust designs of 1785 are mentioned in these tables, because all coins bearing this date have only Mailed Bust obverses.

None of the early writers mentioned that the shoulder drapery of the toga, or tunic as it is alternately called, is held together at the neck by a large, ornamental brooch or fibula, to give it the Roman name. This figure is quite conspicuous on our Draped Bust obverses, and is shown

in several different variations. Where the shoulder drapery divides below this fastening, the under-dress is exposed, and it certainly appears to represent a neck gorget of mail with a varying number of vertical plates which generally have rounded ends, but sometimes they have straight cut terminations.

Reader reaction to the above observations will be much appreciated by ye Editor.

As was so often the case back in 1975, and even today, not a single reply was received to this Technical Note. However, that is not the end of our story. Ned had prepared a plate of "Types of Mailed Bust Facing Left effigies: 1785, 1786, 1787 & 1788" in connection with his speculations. Unfortunately Ned had misplaced his plate and we had to run the story without it. Recently – some eleven years after Ned's death in 1989 we were going through some boxed materials that had not been examined since his death, and there – lo and behold – was Ned's long missing plate which now appears on the following page. Before you examine Ned's plate – ask yourself – how many specimens does it require to make up a "type collection" of mailed Bust Left Connecticuts? How many of these designs, perhaps, lie hidden beneath the draped cloaks of our beloved Connecticuts?

Comments anyone? **JCS**

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Type No. Data for the Following Plate

[Quote from Barnsley] "The effigies are arranged in descending order of importance of hair ribbons, as follow: ..."

Type 1 - Obverse 9 of 1788: Square shoulder angle. Triangular hair ribbon.

Type 2 - Obverse 3 of 1787: Recurved shoulder truncation. Heart shaped hair ribbon.

Type 3 - Obverses 6.1 and 6.2 of 1787: Outline design.

Type 4 - Obverse 4 of 1787.

Type 5 - Obverse 8 of 1787.

Type 6 - Obverses 7 and 8 of 1788: Obtuse shoulder angle.

Type 7 - Obverses 10, 11, 12.1, 12.2 of 1788: Open mouth.

Type 8 - Obverse 13 of 1787.

Type 9 - Mailed bust head has sneer nose.
1785: Obverses 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 & 8
1786: Obverses 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.13 & 5.14.

Type 10 - Teenager. Rough hair. Profile similar to Types 1 and 8. Twelve leaves, in triplets.
1787 Obverses: 2, 5, 10, 11.1, 11.3, 12, 14 & 15(?).

Type 11 - Obverse 9 of 1787.

Type 12 - Obverse 5.3 of 1786. Obverse 7 of 1787. Hercules head (Lumpy head).

Types of MAILED BUST FACING LEFT effigies:
1785, 1786, 1787 & 1788

TYPE 1

TYPE 2

TYPE 3

TYPE 4

TYPE 5

TYPE 6

TYPE 7

TYPE 8

TYPE 9

TYPE 10

TYPE 11

TYPE 12

Letter to the Editor

from
Harry E. Salyards, M.D.; Hastings, NE

I finally got around to reading the December issue of the *CNL* this weekend, along with the December issue of *The "Conder" Token Collector's Journal*—and it's very interesting to compare Matthew Boulton's response to Philip Parry Price Myddelton, as related in Richard Margolis's article, with his response to Sir George Jackson, the proposer of the Bishop's Stortford token (Dalton & Hamer Herts #4), as related by Dr. Richard Doty in his *CTCJ* article.

The correspondence with these two prospective token customers was occurring simultaneously, after all, in the late winter and early spring of 1796. Yet his reaction to the two men's proposals was very different.

Myddelton clearly came with grandiose ideas for both sides of his proposed token—and Boulton worked hard to talk him out of them:

> "I am sorry to differ with you in opinion but I must acknowledge that for so small a piece as a half peny, there are too many figures, too much intricacy, & too little Simplicity which is a beauty in medals...Copper ½ pence will chiefly pass through the hands of unlettered persons & the device should be such as to be understood at first sight."
>
> (Boulton to P. P. P. Myddelton, February 12, 1796.)

But Baronet Jackson came to Boulton with an appropriately condescending attitude toward those hands through which the prospective token would pass—

> "Being for use among the lower class it seems as if that production [a simple design] would soonest be admitted into their approbation—Emblematical representations are suitd [sic] only to people of arather [sic] higher rank."
>
> (Sir George Jackson to his friend John Krill, whom he had chosen to approach Boulton; letter dated May 4, 1795. Cited by Doty in *CTCJ* #14, December 15, 1999, page 9.)

Baronet Jackson wanted only a simple rendition of ears of barley for the reverse of his token; and yet, Boulton proceeded to suggest something a good deal more elaborate:

> "If there was a view of that [Stort] Navigation something like D or C [two drawings, now lost] I think the Country people wd like it better & the inscription of payable at BP Stortford may be put round ye Edge."
>
> (Boulton to Sir George Jackson, February 18, 1796; Doty, op.cit., p. 11.)

Touching, to see Boulton marketing to the "Country people" on the Baronet's behalf! In any event, as Doty notes, "Four days later, Sir George agreed to Boulton's suggestion."

He was obviously less successful in persuading Myddelton to opt for that simple "Peace & Liberty to all the World," both sides of the Myddelton token instead retaining considerable allegorical artistry. And if the issue was merely over the degree of "Emblematical representation," even the spruced-up version of the Bishop's Stortford token is a good deal more literal. But my lingering

suspicion is that Boulton's responses were very much tailored to the social standing and perceived financial wherewithal of his customers—thus the wealthy baronet deserved a more memorable design than a mere bunch of barley ears, whereas that very emblem would perhaps have been ideal for the "beer budget" of the legally-hounded, ex-colonial physician!

❖ ❖ ❖ In Response ❖ ❖ ❖
from
Richard Margolis

Dr. Salyards has pointed out Matthew Boulton's simultaneous yet quite differing advice on coinage (i.e., token) design, which he suggested in 1796 to Philip Parry Price Myddelton on the one hand, and to Sir George Jackson on the other.

While at first thought this would simply appear to be hypocrisy on Boulton's part, I would also suggest that these very differing kinds of advice can be seen as reflecting two separate but coexisting aspects of his long and varied career. On the one hand Boulton, the veteran manufacturer, with first-hand knowledge obtained from his own very extensive experience at the Soho Manufactory and Mint, advises Myddelton to employ a simple, practical design.

In his dealings with Sir George Jackson, however, we see quite another side of Matthew Boulton. Long accustomed to catering to the nobility, whose approbation had been not only necessary to the success of many of his ventures, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, pleasing to his ego, it was second nature for him to attempt to curry favor with Sir George by suggesting a more elaborate design for his tokens.

1785 Counterfeit Halfpenny New Die Combination Newman 52-85B

From
Byron K. Weston; Milesburg, PA
(TN-184)

I would like to announce the discovery of a new variety of 1785 counterfeit halfpenny made by my friend and correspondent in England, Richard Colliass, a collector extraordinaire of Ancient and British counterfeits. The new variety consists of a previously unknown die combination: the Newman 52 obverse combined with the 85B reverse. Its discovery adds another piece to the 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence puzzle.

1785 Counterfeit Halfpenny – Discovery Specimen
Newman 52-85B
(*Shown 2X actual size.*)

[Weight: 124 grains; x-axis diameter: 27.2 mm; y-axis diameter: 27.0 mm; Die axis: 190 degrees (clockwise)]

Eric P. Newman's 1988 article, "Were Counterfeit British Style Halfpence Dated 1785 Made Specifically For American Use?" which appeared in ANSMN 33, explores the provenance and circulation of five varieties of 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence, that were struck from three obverse and three reverse dies (Obverses 50 through 52, and, Reverses 85A through C). Newman also makes note that the same letter and number punches, as well as the same obverse and reverse device punches, were used in making all five varieties that were known to him at that time.

The Newman 52 obverse is most easily differentiated from the N.50 and N.51 obverse dies by the positioning of the legend GEORGIVS and the dot behind the head of George III. The 85B reverse is easily distinguishable by two die breaks, one at the back of the head of Britannia and another larger die break just above and to the right of her head, near the rim.

The reverse die state in this new combination appears to be earlier than other known specimens found in the N.51-85B combination. The N.51-85B combination was first published by C. Wyllys Betts in the printed version of his 1886 address on "Counterfeit Half Pence" before the American

Numismatic and Archaeological Society, and designated as his No. 4. The 85B reverse is now known combined with two obverse dies, Newman 51 and 52.

Newman's hypothesis that the 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence were made specifically for export to America relies on the elimination of the first of two alternatives:

1. That the 1785 coinage was struck in the United States.

Newman first states that "the die work on the 1785 pieces seems far superior to American abilities of that period." He also eliminates Gary A. Trudgen's suspected connection of 1785 counterfeit halfpence to some varieties of Connecticut coppers (CNL, TN-104, seq. p. 913) by comparing letter punches and concluding that in each situation the punches differ. Further punch evidence linking the letter punches of the 1785 counterfeit halfpence to an Irish obverse brockage, discovered by Mike Ringo, essentially confirms that the dies that made these 1785 pieces "were cut in the British Isles and not in America."

Newman then goes on in support of his second alternative:

2. That the 1785 coinage was struck in Great Britain specifically for shipment to and use in the United States, whether ordered by an American merchant(s) or intended to be sold to an American merchant(s) after production.

For this, Newman points to past documentation to conclude, "that no distribution, circulation or use in Great Britain ever occurred," first mentioning the work of D. T. Batty, whose 19th Century listing of counterfeit and genuine halfpence does not include 1785-dated examples of counterfeit British halfpence. Included in this documentation analysis is the 1960 work of C. Wilson Peck, "English Copper, Tin and Bronze Coins in the British Museum, 1558-1950," which also does not include 1785-dated examples. Newman's further analysis reveals that L. F. Hammond, in a 1929 address entitled, "English Copper Coins and Counterfeits," did not mention 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence. And finally for a complete and thorough analysis of English documentation on counterfeits, Newman includes the 19th Century work on "Imitations of the Regal Coinage" by James Atkins, pointing out that Atkins' listing of British Evasion issues also did not include examples dated 1785.

This new discovery by Richard Colliass, along with that of another previously unknown variety of 1785-dated counterfeit halfpenny, both discovered in England, forces us to re-examine Newman's hypothesis. Also, more recent studies conducted in England on British Evasion issues suggests that a revision or modification of Newman's hypothesis may now be in order.

A previously unrecorded reverse die was discovered by William T. Anton, Jr. while in England, also combined with the Newman 52 obverse: N.52-85D. This specimen is illustrated as No. 25 in *Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies*, co-authored by Bruce Kesse. The N.52-85D die combination, like that of this new discovery, was unknown to Eric P. Newman when he wrote, "Were Counterfeit British Style Halfpence Dated 1785 Made Specifically For American Use?"

These two new varieties, 52-85B and 52-85D, bring the total known varieties of 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence to seven. Interestingly, these new varieties have no known American circulation, and also mark the Newman 52 obverse with the distinction of being the only obverse die combined with all four known reverse dies, 85A, B, C and D. Of these four varieties, another point of distinction would be that the reverse die combinations of 52-85A and 52-85C currently have no known English circulation.

Anton also mentions two other examples of 1785-dated halfpence that he observed while in England, but does not specifically attest as to what varieties they may be. More recent research on British Evasions conducted by Mullhulland Ignatious Cobwright, "A journey through the Monkalokian rain forests in search of the Spiney Fabbaduck," exposes two different 1785-dated varieties of 'Sub-Evasions,' i.e. "…forgeries with minor legend faults and/or dates for which regal pieces do not exist or are impossible." Both of these varieties apparently exhibit otherwise normal legends except for the date of 1785, and are listed as G.0630/B.0560 and G.0632/B.0565. Since photo plates are not included with this monograph, we cannot be certain of a correlation between these listings and those described by Newman, or the newly discovered varieties described in this technical note. However, from Cobwright's numbering scheme of the two obverse dies, G.0630 and G.0632, it may be inferred that these two 1785-dated counterfeits may have a correlation with two different obverse dies described by Newman.

These additional new facts suggest two possible scenarios; one a modification of Newman's hypothesis, and the other the elimination of this hypothesis. The first scenario would simply be that these newly discovered varieties did not circulate in America, while all of the other known varieties were, in fact, intended specifically for export. If additional varieties or specimens of known varieties are discovered in England, the second scenario would suggest that there is no longer any certainty as to which varieties circulated exclusively in America, thus eliminating Newman's second alternative.

As is mentioned in Newman's article, it took 100 years of additional research and findings to conclude that counterfeit halfpence first described in 1875 by S. S. Crosby were made in America. Cooperative efforts among American and English collector/researchers, such as this, may bring to light other new discoveries and, perhaps, eventually solve the 1785-dated counterfeit halfpence puzzle, along with other numismatic puzzles. Hopefully, these cooperative efforts will also create other new puzzles to explore. Students of counterfeit halfpence are indebted to Mr. Colliass for having shared this puzzle piece with his American counterparts.

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank Eric Newman for his review of this article and helpful suggestions.